2/11/71

Dear Howard,

I've not enough time to resume the editing of t e very long motion/response to the gov't's in the clothing/pix suit before taking Lil to work so hasty response to your 2/5. I've got all but the last and longest section edited. The lengthy of the damned things is about a thid of a small book....Good luck on t.e radio. It will be a worthwhile experience, too. When you've seen one microphone, you've seen all of them.

Of the three Ss, I ment Salinger last., Sch. first. His merit is that he talks a lot, for the most part not understanding what he is saying. Otherwise, he'd not have said some of it, the best parts. On Sor, this suggestion: take him as a faithful representation of the administration's thinking (it is he whoprovided the words for the articulation of much of it) to the end of 1962. From then on, assume that he also didn't understand. If you getbthe impression of improvisation, you are right.

Whether, on his own, JFK would not have ordered the withdrawal after the coup in SV, I don't know. I think at tha point nothing would have made any difference to him, but this, nturally, if only an opinion. However, I hold it formly. He had begin to mkake his own decision, and he made this one. One can conjecture that this may have been one of the reasons behind the timing, to make it more difficult for him. I doubt if any difference in what we have (incorrectly)come to call Cong activity is the result of the Coup. It is more likely a reflection of the growing strength of the liberation forces that enabled it. When I discussed this with Gavin, these questions did not come up. He is articulate.

= Wit your soruce, your figures on the number withdrawn may be correct. The difrerence is but three, negligible. I believe mine, which if another public source I don't now recall, confirmed, as I recall, by Gavin. But I'd have to play that tape back to learn. Agian, whether 1,000 or 1,700 is not really material. But I'm sure that only that one withdrawal was made. If there was a connection with the assassination, then you know damned well no more were removed'

I've never checked on how soon LBJ setn them in because I'M sure there was no real change until after the election, which marked a radical change inwhat he was saying. My notes of the Tonkin Bay period are fairly extensive, co.ntemporaneous, right at the time it was happening, and since confirmed. There were dead giveaways. It was carefully planned, not jyst the accident since pretended. Even the area of doubt in my mind is of no major significance, whether LBJ was manipulated or whether he had earlier come to this conclusion. Your under standing here (and you'd enjoy) might be increased by reading Sherill's book, the name of which I've forgotten. I've got the paperback somewhere. His on HHH, which you should also read, ic called The Drug Store Liberal.

Your comment on liberals tells me you have much to learn. That they are sincere is no more relevant than that the KKK is. I don't know why he wuit, but after the missle crisis, he should have immediately. All these guys filter, the most honest. They are all,in varying measures ibvolved and all engaging in self-justification, if only subcpnsciously. When you ask if you can trust what he says, to this ask yourself, what does he not say? I believe that for the most part they don't lie by saying white is black. The leave out and they sahde. You have to do your own t.inking and your own interpret ing. Perhaps in this case I've done too much of it for you for you to get the maximum benefit. But it is this kind of intellectual exercies that will do so much for your understanding of the forces and directions in society and the world.

Gotta shave. Idl wants to go in early. The postage scales were given to me by cherished friends who like then and though I might need them. I don't. Let them remind you of two wonderful people who lived through the China upheaval.

Best,